

Response ID ANON-6Z2U-8U8G-3

Submitted to Display of Flags and Emblems - Call for Evidence
Submitted on 2026-08-13 18:50:51

Introduction

1 Confirmation of having read the Northern Ireland Assembly Committee's Privacy Notice.

I confirm that I have read the privacy notice.

2 What is your name?

Name:

[REDACTED]

3 What is your email address?

Email:

[REDACTED]

4 If you are providing a submission on behalf of an organisation or business, please state its name.

Organisation:

5 The Committee for Infrastructure has agreed to publish all responses as part of the survey results. If you would like to have your survey results anonymised and for us not to publish your name or organisation, please indicate so here.

I would like my views to be anonymous and understand that my name and organisation details will be withheld, along with any identifiers in the response, but my views will still be published.

Clause 1: Removal of flags or emblems in the public interest

6 Do you agree with Clause 1 of the Bill?

Yes

7 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

As a point of principle I believe that flags or emblems should not be displayed on street furniture at all, no matter the event or community group which they purport to represent. Street furniture should be treated as neutral infrastructure. As a taxpayer I am happy to contribute to the role of the Dept of Infrastructure; but I am not happy that the objects which my taxes fund are used for any other than their designated purpose.

Clause 2: Sensitive places

8 Do you agree with Clause 2 of the Bill?

Yes

9 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

Sensitive places and shared spaces as defined above should certainly remain free of flags and emblems. I believe that they are largely placed as, at the least, territorial markers rather than being innocently celebratory. Whether green, white and gold or red, white and blue, their presence on arterial routes has always been unwelcome, as has the painting of kerbstones.

Defacement of any area in the above ways does nothing to promote community relations and sets a poor example of respect for public buildings and materials.

Clause 3: Procedure for / notification of, or giving views on, flags or emblems

10 Do you agree with Clause 3 of the Bill?

Yes

11 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

Whilst I am of the view that flags and emblems are unwelcome under any circumstances, the introduction of such a portal would at least enhance communication, offer a voice to citizens, and provide a useful source of data for those in the unenviable role of decision-making.

Clause 4: Code of Practice

12 Do you agree with Clause 4 of the Bill?

Yes

13 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

The introduction of a well-informed Code of Practice underpinned by contributions from an appropriately broad range of stakeholders would be welcome. It could serve as, variously: guidance; a vantage-point from which to begin to view and assess specific instances; and as a touchstone for challenge, resolution and, one hopes, acceptance of the Department's decisions.

Clause 5: Offence of obstructing the Department in removal of flag or emblem

14 Do you agree with Clause 5 of the Bill?

Yes

15 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

I agree that there ought to be consequences for obstruction but am reluctant to specify what those consequences might be given the broad spectrum of reasons for the obstruction taking place. However, as a starting point, a fine seems appropriate.

Clause 6: Request for assistance from police

16 Do you agree with Clause 6 of the Bill?

Yes

17 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

With sympathy for the PSNI officers who find themselves between a rock and a hard place in such situations I nonetheless think that their involvement could well be necessary were a breach of the peace to prove likely.

Is there a role for Community Stewards, for example, to intervene before a breach of the peace occurs? This might deescalate tension, or at least slow the descent into confrontation.

Clause 7: Interpretation

18 Do you agree with Clause 7 of the Bill?

Yes

19 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

Clause 8: Commencement

20 Do you agree with Clause 8 of the Bill?

Yes

21 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

Clause 9: Short title

22 Do you agree with Clause 9 of the Bill?

Yes

23 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible: